

INFORMAT REPORT

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Comment: The following report, although not of particularly recent date, is interesting as a specific example of the strained relations which have existed for some time between the Austrian Communist Party and the Slovene Liberation Front (OF) in Austria, as a result of the Tito-Cominform dispute. Theoretically, the OF in Austria is an auxiliary of the Austrian Communist Party. [REDACTED] the scene of the incident which is described in this report; it would seem likely, however, that it is a Bezirk of Carinthia, possibly Bezirk Voelkmarkt.)

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- On 10 October 1948, a conference was held in the office of CP District Headquarters "X", attended by 43 persons, with the district secretary, Martin Hammer, presiding. The Bezirk's Obmann, Johann Schleusani, was present, and Paul Springer and Josef Hischelwitzer attended as representatives of CP provincial headquarters for Carinthia. The agenda included the discussion of the political situation, the choice of delegates for the federal Party convention in Vienna, and miscellaneous matters.
- Before opening the general discussion, the district secretary read an order, which, he explained, was the reason for Springer's and Hischelwitzer's presence at the conference. This order demanded that all Slovene comrades acknowledge the Cominform and renounce all fractional activity (Tito sympathy); that all Slovene comrades decide either for the CP or for Tito and that they welcome the exclusion from the CP of Karl Pruschnig, Franz Ogris, Andreas Haderlap, and Malina Mohor. After reading the order, the district secretary announced that those comrades who refused to signify concurrence would have to leave the premises. [REDACTED] Comment: It was announced in the Communist press in October 1948 that Pruschnig, secretary of the OF organization of Carinthian Slovenes, and three other members had been expelled from the CP. [REDACTED] as editor of *Vestnek* and a member of the Provincial Committee of the OF in Klagenfurt.)
- The reading of this order provoked a violent argument between Springer and Haderlap, and the latter, with Fritz Krast and 30 other Slovene members, left the meeting and went to consult Dr. Franz Petek, an official of the OF provincial committee. Dr. Petek explained that at the last meeting of OF provincial headquarters, the opinion was expressed that all OF officials might be excluded from the CP, and it was deemed quite certain that the CP would not allow Slovene

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members to take part in the Federal convention in Vienna. Dr. Petek recommended that Haderlan and his comrades return to the district conference and state that, of the members constituting a majority (32) of those attending the meeting, they should not be excluded. They returned to the district conference but were refused admittance. Thereupon, they went to OF headquarters where they drew up a protest addressed to the Central Committee of the CP. This protest was signed by the 32 dissenting Slovenes. They also decided to draw up a list of all OF members in the CP, who number about 2,700, and to send a delegation to present this list at the Party convention in Vienna, with the threat that these OF members might withdraw from the CP. [Comment: Source does not explain how the 32 OF members of District "X" could threaten withdrawal of all OF members in the CP. Presumably, they intended to submit the list through a provincial delegation. It is not known whether or not such a list was presented at the recent Party convention in Vienna.]

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